

Appln No. 10/736,751

Preliminary Amendment dated February 21, 2005

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**In the Abstract:**

Please replace the Abstract with the following new paragraph.

A microscope having a pair of braces connecting a head portion, carrying an objective, to the base, to which a stage is attached. The braces, which preferably have resonant frequency that is not a harmonic or sub-harmonic of the fundamental frequency of vibration of the C-shaped frame, function to reduce vibration and enhance the clarity of the image viewed through the objective. In one embodiment, the length of the braces along a vertical optical axis of the microscope can be adjusted to provide very fine focusing control.